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past, in the exciting events of the present, and in anxious speculations as to the unknown future. The objects of nature which everywhere surround him, teem with the same teaching; inviting him to enrich his mental stores by culling her sweets; to contribute to his own and his fellow-creatures' enjoyments, by the investigation and reproduction of her beauties.

If, then, the cultivation of Art is so intimately connected with a state of high civilization that the two seem almost necessarily coëxistent, the duty of sustaining it in a vigorous and healthful state is as incumbent upon us as is the direction of our commercial interests or domestic affairs.

Let us bear this in mind, that however negligently practised, however ill directed, the arts and sciences will always be practised in some state or other among us, and that they will thus exercise their influence for good or for evil on the minds and tastes of the present and succeeding generations: and I think we must feel that the study of their principles should not be the exceptional thing it now is, nor their importance so little accounted of that the expression of any earnest feeling or love of them for their own sakes, apart from personal advantage or pecuniary interest, is too often, even among educated men, looked upon as highly unfashionable, or as exhibiting an extravagant amount of enthusiasm in a comparatively trifling cause.

It is much to be wished that a kindlier and more conciliatory spirit could be infused into discussions upon questions and differences relating to the fine arts than is often at present found to be the case, both among artists and amateurs.

If such debates were carried on in a feeling of friendly emulation, instead of the angry and defiant tone which sometimes characterizes them, how much of mutual misunderstanding might be avoided; for the very fact of each of the contending parties maintaining earnest opinions upon their subject would seem to argue the existence of at least one strong bond of union between them, namely, the recognition of the influence and value of fine art.

Could men but bring themselves to see how often they may agree upon principles, instead of losing sight of these, and allowing their antagonistic feelings upon minor points to have the preponderance, they might be surprised to find how great were their agreements and how small the differences which had separated true friends—friends who, had they understood one another sooner, might, with delight, have "talked down the sun" in kindly and profitable companionship.

That Art in the abstract, independent as it is in material laws, supplying no bodily want, ministering to no substantial necessity, but appealing to the highest and least corporeal sympathies we possess, should hold in the hearts of its adherents the place it does, affording them, as it were, springs of life and feeling, which those

who are strangers to its influences cannot even comprehend, seems to invest it with such a character and dignity peculiarly its own.

The exotic of a brighter clime, its pleasures seem strewn around us by a Divine hand, as flowers by the way, to minister both to our solace and instruction in our passage through the scenes of time and sense.

I can never recognize the existence of high imaginative talent, that gift which enables its possessor to bring before the mind's eye combinations of ideal beauty such as the outward eye has never seen, though founded on the general principles of material nature, or in accordance with her harmonies, without feeling that it is indeed a mysterious power, and, perhaps, constitutes the highest mental endowment that humanity is capable of, and one which may be made the means to very high ends in the cause of moral and intellectual culture.

Perchance, indeed, the visions of genius may, at times, in the exercise of this magic gift, have reproduced some shadow of the glories of the unfallen world, as it first left the hands of the Creator. Perhaps, too, through the medium of the artist's pencil, the poet's pen, the musician's lyre, in their pursuit of high art's best prerogative, the combination of the beautiful and the true, we may have been vouchsafed occasional glimpses of what the face of nature shall appear, of the harmonies that shall then awake, when, her travail past, creation shall be restored, never again to fade; and man, transformed to angelic dignity, shall go forth to enter upon an everlasting sojourn, in regions of perfect beauty.

LONGING FOR THE MOUNTAINS.

Longing for the shining mountains; longing
For their silver clouds and purple rain!
All the brightness to the plain belonging
Is a glare that brings us only pain.
Twilight's veil, and every black-fringed shower
Folds the level landscape like a pall:
Oh, to bathe in mountain-light an hour,
Floating as the splendors rise and fall!

Longing for the friendly mountains; longing
For the welcome of each stern, white brow;
For the echoes from their gorges thronging;
For the holy hush among them now!
Though the lowlands overflow with singing;
Though there's joy and music everywhere;
Cheap were all the songs the wind is bringing,
For a whisper of the mountain air.

Longing for the mountains, ever longing!
Dreaming of their glory night and day!
Tell us, fields and meadows, are we wronging
Lovely things that deck your even way?
Oh, the beckoning mountains far-off lying;—
Vision for the soul's uplifting given!
Toward their summits will our hearts be flying,
Longing for them as we long for heaven!

LUOY LARCOM.